United States Department of the Interior

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In Reply Refer To:
6800 (AK-93113) P

March 24, 2009

Instruction Memorandum No. AK 2009-019
Expires: 09/30/2009

To: All Alaska Employees

From: State Director

Subject: Project Planning, Development, and Reporting Procedures

Background: Managers, program leads, and resource specialists need standards and documentation to develop useful products, determine a project's cost/benefit ratio, and decide whether the project is meeting the BLM's goals and objectives. This Instruction Memorandum (IM) refines our ability to enhance the merits of a project, establishes funding guidelines, and includes requirements for final project reports as well as reporting progress of multi-year projects.

This process will bring consistent structure to project planning and management and will promote efficiencies and cost effectiveness. It will help ensure projects meet management needs and goals. The emphasis on project documentation and reporting will improve and preserve the BLM corporate knowledge in the affected programs. In addition, this process will encourage employees to complete Open File Reports, Technical Reports, journal articles, or other publications.

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum establishes a process to enhance project planning, development, and reporting procedures that will meet five objectives:

- Ensure managers have reviewed all projects considered for funding through the functional group process;
- all funded projects facilitate managers' decision-making ability or implement a management decision;
- projects are tied to a BLM land use plan or activity plan, or demonstrate a relationship to the land use plan and/or the BLM's Strategic Plan;
- all projects support the BLM mission;
- and all projects (as appropriate) include yearly progress and final report(s).

Through this process, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that as we proceed, we adhere to our Data Management Plan.

Affected Program Areas: Subactivities 1010, 1020, 1030, 1040, 1050, 1110, 1120, 1150, 1210, 1220, 1310, 1330, 1410 (except for the Land Transfer Project), 1420, 1430, 1492, 1610, 1640, 1770, 1990, 3110, 3130, 5900, and 9620.

Policy: This process requires that project proposals be entered into the Budget Planning System (BPS), an implementation plan be developed (as deemed necessary by program leads and project proponents), and project reports be prepared for every funded project. Project proponents and their managers are encouraged to coordinate with and obtain concurrence from other affected BLM organizational units for projects that require funds from BLM source(s)/programs outside their area of responsibility.

Action: All offices are required to provide specific information about project proposals in BPS, project design/implementation plans, and project reports as outlined in the attachments.

Timeframe: This IM is effective immediately upon receipt.

Budget Impact: The information obtained from this process will assist in facilitating overall improvement to present and future budget processes.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: None

Coordination: It is imperative that Office Managers, State Program Leads, Resource Specialists, Office Analysts, and the State Budget Office formally coordinate implementation of this I.M. through a budget schedule that reflects changes to project ranking/funding.

Contacts: If you have any questions concerning these instructions, contact Ted Murphy, Deputy State Director, Division of Resources, at 907-271-4413.

Signed by: Authenticated by:
Thomas Lonnie   Anita R. Jette
State Director   Records Specialist

3 Attachments

1- Project Development Overview & Instructions (4 pp)
2- Example BPS Project, "AK/Multi/Kigluaik Char Study" (3pp)
3- Project Operational Plan (4pp)

Project Planning, Development, and Reporting

Overview

Project funding and documentation will consist of the three steps outlined below. Successive steps build one upon the other while the product of each step is a "stand alone" document.

Documentation

Step 1. BPS Entry/Project Proposal
The BPS entry will display sufficient detail and compelling information that makes the case for project funding without presenting a detailed project design. Due dates for BPS projects are established by the State Budget Office.

Step 2. Project Design/Implementation Plan
The amount of documentation in the project design/implementation plan should reflect the cost, need, and complexity of the project. If a project anticipates funding (this is generally established at a spring functional group meeting held prior to the fiscal year funding is provided), then a project design or implementation plan will be created and attached to the BPS project proposal. The design/plan will include a detailed description of objectives, methods, schedules, products, and responsibilities of the participants. The program lead, in cooperation with the project proponent, will determine the need for a detailed project design. Some less complex projects will not require a detailed project design. However, all projects will require some level of a project design statement to explain how they meet the requirements that justify funding. Project designs are due in BPS (as an attached document) 30 days after the spring functional group meeting held prior to the fiscal year funding is provided, or as negotiated by the program lead. Program leads will coordinate a peer review of project designs/plans shortly after this date.

Step 3. Project Report
The project report consists of current results and analysis of data along with an examination of the degree to which project objectives were met. Multi-year projects require yearly progress reports with a similar outline. The reports will document the project and can serve as a success story attached in BPS. The due dates for these reports are listed below under "Funding". Due dates for success stories in BPS are established by the State Budget Office.

Funding

Project funding depends on approval of the design/implementation plan by the program lead. If the design/plan is found inadequate, the program lead will work with the project proponent to ensure the project is scientifically sound and warrants funding.

Continued funding of a multi-year project depends on need and accomplishment as documented in the annual progress report. Failure to provide an annual progress report may be reason to terminate funding. Annual progress reports are due in BPS one month after that year's project work is completed (i.e. data collection or on-the-ground work is complete for that year) or as negotiated by the affected manager, project proponent, and program lead. Due to budget timelines, a multi-year project will not have its first progress report evaluated until after the second year in most cases.

Final project reports are due in BPS three months after project completion (i.e. data collection or on-the-ground work is complete for the project) or as negotiated by the manager, project proponent, and program lead. Program leads will make recommendations to the affected manager as to acceptability of progress and final reports. This is intended to be a collaborative process. Should there be significant concerns affecting a mutual agreement, the ultimate decision would be made by the Associate State Director.

Instructions

Elements are listed below for each stage of documentation. Examples are also provided for some elements. As noted above, each successive document contains all the information in the previous document plus additional information or detail. Again, **only address elements that apply to your project. The amount and detail of documentation should reflect the cost, need, and complexity of the project.**

1. BPS Entry/Project Proposal – brief and concise. (The list below does not contain instructions already provided in BPS. Please adhere to instructions in I.M. 2006-042 as well.)

Project Name.
- Use Naming Convention in I.M AK 2006-042. The Project Name must list (in this order)
    - State (AK)
    - Special Focus Work (if applicable, i.e. CCS, NLCS, NPRA, AML, SWA)
    - Project Code (if applicable, i.e. 013L)
    - Project Title

Example: (AK/CCS/014L/Campbell Creek Stream Restoration).

If the project is to be funded by more than one subactivity (i.e. 1770, 1010, 1040), the acronym "Multi" must be used in the "Special Focus Work" sequence of the Project Name (i.e. AK/MULTI/013L/930 GIS Maintenance Term). The subactivities funding the project may go in the project "Title".

<u>Description of Project</u>

- Provide a short project description and time frame (single or multi-year).
- Provide a brief description of study design/methods.

- Set the context for the project (i.e. project provides interpretation for trail site that was cleared under last year's recreation project BPS #xxxxxx).
- Provide a brief description of data management for project.
- State the monitoring or research question/hypothesis (must be included in monitoring/research projects).
- Describe how the project:
    - meets agency's mission, including BLM's current Operating Plan.
    - meets requirement(s) of a specific Land Use Plan/Activity Plan.
    - will accomplish specific goals & objectives. List <u>measurable</u> objectives when appropriate (i.e. a monitoring project will have "SMART" objectives: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Repeatable, Timeframe).
    - meets management objectives, including how the project implements a management decision or facilitates management decision-making.
    - fits into the framework of the ALT Funding Priority Process, including State Director Priorities.

Benefits/Results
Identify:

- Deliverables/product(s) to be developed. Include completion date(s) for progress and final reports.
- Specific achievements regarding Bureau goals and strategies.
- Performance and workload measures to be achieved.

Feasibility/Implementation/Proposal
Provide:
- Detail on funding, labor and operations: contracts, supplies, equipment, vehicles, travel and schedule of accomplishments/deliverables within annual timeframes. Include total life-cycle costs and long term funding requirements.

Support/Partners/Concerns

- Identify individuals, groups, etc. or legal actions that support/oppose project.
- Provide detail on partner contributions (specific type and amount of contribution for each partner).

2. Project Design/Implementation Plan

This document will contain all of the information in BPS (cut & paste) with some elements covered in more detail.

Methods
Add:
- Study/project area: site description/map

- How site(s) will be accessed
- Detailed study design/methods/sampling protocol/restoration method
- Parameters measured
- Equipment and techniques used
- Data management/data location/metadata
- Responsible party/participants

3. Project Progress/Final Report

This document will contain all the information in the project design/implementation plan (cut & paste) and include elements shown below to Methods section. Add the Results and Discussion/Conclusions sections.

<u>Methods</u>

- Study/Project Area: Latitude and Longitude of site(s), photos
- How site(s) were accessed/directions to sites

<u>Results</u>

- Data/Analysis of data (include graphs, photos, statistics etc.)
- Description of data quality or erroneous data

<u>Discussion/Conclusions</u>

- Were project objectives met/monitoring question answered?
- Significance of data (or project) to BLM management or decision making ability
- Threats to validity or reliability of research/monitoring data (e.g. small sample size, instrumentation failure, weather, etc.)
- Problems in executing the project that were encountered or solved
- Other lessons learned
- Remedial action needed
- Future work needed
- Recommendations